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JPRS: 4737

29 June 1961

MOSCOW'S CURRENT CULTURAL POLICY TOWARD THE NON-RUSSIAN  
NATIONALITIES IN THE SOVIET UNION

By Paul Urban

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## FOREWORD

This publication was prepared under contract by the UNITED STATES JOINT PUBLICATIONS RESEARCH SERVICE, a federal government organization established to service the translation and research needs of the various government departments.

JPRS: 4737

CSO: 1837-S/1

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Following is the translation of an article by Paul  
Urban in Osteuropa (Eastern Europe) No 3, Stuttgart,  
March 1961, pages 212-226.

On 23 September 1960 Khrushchev brought before the meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations his proposed resolution: "Statement on Granting Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples." Together with representatives of the Belorussian and Ukrainian SSR, he rejected any discussion of the status of the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union, stating that these enjoyed perfect freedom of political as well as cultural life. In everyone's recollection are Khrushchev's words to UN newspapermen that he would "smash in the face" anyone who dared interfere in the "internal affairs" of the Soviet Union, and his rowdy exhibition with shoe in hand during the address of the Philippine representative, who proposed that the question of Soviet colonialism be placed on the agenda of the United Nations. For this very reason, Moscow's behavior toward the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union deserves closer study. In the following pages, this behavior will be examined from the viewpoint of recent cultural policy.

General Cultural Policy

Officially, Soviet cultural policy is defined in the familiar formula: "Socialist culture in substance, national culture in form," which includes the struggle against manifestations of "bourgeois nationalism" and so-called national isolationism in the culture of the individual peoples. In theory, this principle applies also to Russian (i.e., Great Russian) culture itself, although in a special manner, as will be seen.

Since the purges of the Thirties in the non-Russian Union Republics, especially destructive to the intelligentsia and the educated classes, the main emphasis has been on bringing Russian culture to the non-Russian peoples of the USSR. By the end of the 1940s, the new formula had

emerged: "Soviet culture must be built on the foundation of the extremely rich culture of the Russian people." (see, for example, Meeting of the Scholars' Council of the Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Voprosy Istorii, No 3/1949, p. 152). During the de-Stalinization period, this formula was, of course, forgotten, and the national leadership in the non-Russian republics demanded in cultural matters the same rights as those enjoyed by the Russian people. The result was even a certain rehabilitation of the cultural heritage of these peoples and of the spokesmen of their culture, particularly writers and composers, among them a number of victims of the Stalin purges. (see for Belorussia Literatura i mastastva (Literature and Art), 20 March 1957; for Uzbekistan, the speech of Mukhitdinov in October 1956 in Pravda Vostoka, 13 October 1956).

With the 21st Party Congress of the CPSU (1959) began the "transition of Soviet society from socialism to the building of Communism," which also required the creation of a unified culture in the "self-developing Communist society." The 21st Party Congress, in which "transition" stood, along with the Seven-Year Plan, as a central theme, was followed by a great number of directives which revealed the road to be taken by the coming "Communist" culture. The most important of these is the directive of the Central Committee of the CPSU of 9 January 1960 "On the Tasks of Party Propaganda under Present Conditions," which said among other things:

"A relentless struggle must be waged against manifestations of bourgeois nationalism, against tendencies to idealize or ignore the social contradictions of the past and to distort the true history of this or that nation and its relations with other peoples of the USSR, and against particular manifestations of national isolationism and exclusiveness ..." (Sovetskaya Belorussia, 12 January 1960)

The meaning of this directive becomes clear if we take into account that they are rarely talking about Russian "bourgeois nationalism" -- which they call Great Russian chauvinism -- in contrast to that of the non-Russian peoples. Consequently, the "relentless struggle against manifestations of bourgeois nationalism" and against "particular manifestations of isolationism and exclusiveness" refers primarily to the non-Russian peoples of the USSR.

Actually, even before the Central Committee directive of 9 January and before the 21st Congress of the CPSU, articles began to appear in the press of various republics clearly pointing in this direction and demanding that the non-Russian peoples obliterate their national "boundaries" in cultural affairs and adhere to the "progressive" culture of the "great Russian people." An example of this is the essay "Some Questions on International Education" by the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Kazakhstan Communist Party, N. D. Dshandildin. (Kommunist, No 13, 1959, pp. 30-43) He maintained that the struggle must be waged on two fronts -- against local nationalism and against Russian chauvinism (not yet called "bourgeois nationalism"). But he then turned his entire attention to manifestations of local "bourgeois

nationalism" in science, literature, art and language, against which, as he says, "an unconditional struggle is to be waged."

The First Secretary of the Uzbekistan CP, Sh. R. Rashidov, in his essay "Forever United with the Russian People", (Kommunist, No 16, 1959) was even more explicit. He emphasized the "progressive results" of the union of Central Asia with the Russian empire, demanded "the full liquidation of all vestiges of bourgeois ideology" in the cultural domain, and openly declared:

"The creation of an international socialist culture in the period of the building of Communism involves increased demands for the study of the culture of all peoples, first of all of the most progressive and most developed culture in the countries of the socialist camp, the culture of the Russian people, their literature and art. Therefore, internationalism requires not less interest in Russian language, literature and general culture, but a strengthening of this interest, a comprehensive propagation of the study of the Russian language among all national leaders, among all peoples, and especially among the youth, since Russian is the language of the highest socialist culture of the world, the language of the most progressive literature and art ..." (loc. cit., p 50)

Rashidov has thus clearly indicated which will be the dominant culture in the coming Communist society -- the Russian, here considered as an already completed socialist culture. Rashidov's following words also leave us in no doubt:

"Unquestionably, all the peoples of our country are equal ... Yet, we must not for a moment forget that they owe all their successes to the Communist Party, the Soviet Government and the Russian people. The day by day, true brotherly help of the Russian people, of the Russian working class and of Russian Communists have made it possible for all the peoples of our country to achieve together the full and decisive triumph of socialism and to proceed confidently into the shining Communist future." (loc. cit., p 52)

We are here strongly reminded of the remark in Orwell's satirical novel Animal Farm: "All animals are created equal, but some are more equal than others." If we add Rashidov's definition of the Russian people as "people of clear minds and generous hearts," with whom "no people on earth can compare," (ibid., p 42) then it seems there is nothing for the non-Russian people to do but to resign themselves to their fate and subordinate themselves to the Russian people. That this is not only the opinion of a single official, can be seen in the language and school policy. In the words of the Azerbaidzhan writer Mirsa Ibragimov, "the culture of the peoples of the Soviet Union must be the culture of Lomonosov, Belinskiy, Chernishevskiy, Turgenev, Nekrasov, Tolstoy, Gorky, Mayakovsky, Sholokov, Fadeyev, Tvardovsky and, above all, of Lenin, which ostensibly represents the "peak of human thought, the loftiest accomplishment of world culture," the culture, therefore, of the Russian people, in which "the Soviet peoples, pearls created by Russian genius," find their "historical salvation." (Bakinskiy Rabochiy

(Baku Worker), 11/12/59)

The CC directive of 9 January 1960 was followed by almost daily comments and instructions on the necessity for the struggle against manifestations of "bourgeois nationalism" in cultural matters in the non-Russian republics. I. R. Rasakov, First Secretary of the CC, declared, for example, to the 11th Congress of the Kirghiz CP in February 1960:

"The (Kirghiz) CC Bureau in its directive of 5 January 1960 condemned the false, politically harmful comments of B. Yunusalyev, A. Tokombayev, K. Yudachin, B. Kerimshanov, Sh. Umetalyev and K. Malikov, rescinded its own erroneous earlier resolutions on evaluation of the work of Moldo Kylytsh and the rehabilitation of K. Tynystanov, and made the correct evaluation in principle of the concepts contained in their work. The necessary measures for this purpose were unanimously approved at the full Plenary Session of the CC of the Kirghiz CP in January of this year." (Sovetskaya Kirgiziya, 2/26/60)

Why the Party rescinded its "erroneous resolutions" of 1956-57 and condemned the statements of the Kirghiz scientists and historians of literature was made clear by Rasakov with the remark that these latter had "tried to make heroes of the reactionary poet Moldo Kylytsh and the leading ideologist of bourgeois nationalism, K. Tynystanov." (ibid.) Moldo Kylytsh is considered the Kirghiz national poet of the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, while K. Tynystanov, already in the Soviet period was a well-known writer and leading figure in the political-cultural field. Because of his "nationalistic views" Tynystanov was condemned in 1933 and later "liquidated." Both were rehabilitated during the "thaw" after the 20th Congress of the CPSU. (see "Za leninskuyu otsenku kulturnogo naslediya" (For a Leninist Evaluation of the Cultural Heritage) Sovetskaya Kirgiziya, 24/1/60) On this subject, the Party has often turned against the national cultural heritage of the Kirghiz people. In fact, in a feature article published in Sovetskaya Kirgiziya (24/1/60) on the development of Kirghiz culture, it proposed to revert to the 1952 decisions of the 11th CC Plenum of the Kirghiz CP, that is, to the proposition that the "socialist" culture of the Soviet peoples, including that of the Kirghiz people, must be "built" on the foundation of the very rich culture of the Russian people. (The last Soviet proposition or instruction that Soviet socialist culture was to be built on the foundation of Russian culture, had its definitive formulation at the 19th Party Congress of the CPSU, the last in Stalin's lifetime). Sovetskaya Kirgiziya 24/1/60 stressed that the attempts of the Kirghiz intelligentsia to rehabilitate the cultural heritage of Moldo Kylytsh and K. Tynystanov represent direct manifestations of "bourgeois nationalism," and "a deviation from Lenin's directive," against which "a relentless struggle must be carried on." These "directives" of Lenin, therefore, demand union with the culture of the Russian people as Rasakov unequivocally asserted in his above mentioned report before the 11th Congress of the Kirghiz CP:



"For their liberation, their happy life, their rapidly developing industry and agriculture, their progressive culture and still more splendid future, the Kirghiz people must thank first of all our maternal Party and its wise Leninist nationality policy, the indestructible friendship of the peoples, and their elder brother, the great Russian people." (Sovetskaya Kirgizia, 26/2/60)

At the beginning of 1960, all Party Congresses in the republics were held under this slogan and watchword of struggle against the slightest manifestations of "bourgeois nationalism" among the non-Russian peoples of the USSR. The First Secretary of the CC of the Armenian CP, S. A. Tovmasian, said to the 21st Congress of the Armenian CP:

"The interests of the Communist education of the working class demand the utmost intensification of the struggle against the vestiges of capitalism and against every manifestation of bourgeois ideology, of nationalism, of national isolationism and pride that are found in some works of history, literature and art." (Kommunist, 11/2/60)

The same note was sounded at the 20th Congress of the Georgian CP (report of W. P. Mshavanadze, Zarya Vostoka (Dawn of the East), 26/1/60); at the 24th Congress of the Azerbaïdzhani CP (report of W. Ju. Akhundov, Bakinskiy Rabochiy, 17/2/60); at the 15th Congress of the Uzbekistan CP (report of Sh. R. Rashidov, Pravda Vostoka, 11/2/60); at the 24th Congress of the Belorussian CP (report of K. T. Masurov, Svyasda (Star), 18/2/60, etc.

In addition to the general CC directive "On the Tasks of Party Propaganda ..." (9/1/60), which made into a national question the decisions adopted at the Party Congresses of the republics, special orders and directives followed in individual cases. Among these, the instruction of the CC of the CPSU of 6 May 1960 to the Georgian CP deserves special study. It pointed to errors of a "national" character that had made their appearance in Georgia in published works on the general and cultural history of the Georgian people. At the republican conference of the leading workers of publishing and printing houses, called for this purpose, CC Secretaries W. P. Mshavanadze and G. N. Dshibladze again had to stigmatize Georgian "bourgeois nationalism" and demand removal of "serious deficiencies" in the work of Georgian publishers, general historians and historians of literature, etc. CC First Secretary Mshavanadze went so far as to say:

"Our history is the history of brotherly friendship with other peoples, and especially with the Russian people. Brilliant pages have been written in the annals of this friendship of centuries by Pushkin, Lermontov, Griboyedev, Tolstoy, Tchaikovsky, Gorky, Chaliapin, Mayakovsky and many others. What a noble subject for a historian, researcher, and author would be the theme: Griboyedev and Georgia!" (Zarya Vostoka, 2/6/60)

As we may gather from the feature article "More Good Books!" (Pravda, 10/6/60), the Communist Parties of Armenia, Kazakhstan, and other non-Russian republics have received similar instructions from

the CC of the CPSU. It is also seen in Rashidov's essay in Voprosy Filosofii (Problems of Philosophy) (No 6/1960) and in a speech of the Secretary of the CC of the Latvian CP, A. Voss (Sovetskaya Latvija, 10/6/60) (The connection between remarks on "bourgeois nationalism" and extensive purges and reshuffles in the Latvian Party and government apparatus has already been discussed by J. V. Hehn, Osteuropa, 4/1959, pp 243 ff and 5/1960, pp 356ff )

As a result of this new tightening up of the nationality policy, the leaders of the non-Russian republics now talk of completely suppressing all national individuality and even the "national pattern" or the very concept of a "national pattern" of culture. An example is found in the words of N. Gadshiyev, Secretary of the CC of the Azerbaidzhan CP, in the essay "The International Education of the Working Class" (Partiynaya Zhizn (Party Life), 20/1960, p 13:

"It is observed that people who employ the generally recognized formula 'socialist in substance, national in form,' place emphasis, not on the first but on the second half of the formula, that is, they put national form and national individuality in the foreground and relegate socialist substance to the background. We are deeply convinced, however, that the first is the decisive part of this formula ... We cannot allow form to limit substance and hinder its manifestation. On the contrary, socialist substance is the condition of progress and innovation in form. We must resolutely overcome the notion that "national form" is something fixed, a kind of unchangeable container into which the new socialist substance is fitted. Such an interpretation of "national form" creates a loophole in our judgment, through which all that is obsolete and reactionary can penetrate."

Hence, the national form must also change, and, since everything must take place on the basis of Russian culture, the external form of so-called "socialist" culture will be more or less Russian. An indication of how this will work out in practice was given by Gadshiyev himself when he stated that, in implementation of the CC directive of 9 January 1960, "the broadcast time of Russian-language programs has been increased on the Azerbaidzhan radio, and that in the future, illustrations in the magazine Kirpi will carry Russian as well as Azerbaidzhanian captions." (ibid., p.9)

#### Language Policy

Russification of the national languages of the Soviet minorities already has a long history. In the Asian republics it began in the years after 1937, and after the Latinization of the Twenties and Thirties, when the Russian alphabet completely displaced the native Arabic and Latin. (cf. H. Niedermeier, Osteuropa, 6/1953, pp 413ff ) By decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the Belorussian SSR, of 26 August 1933, not only was spelling changed, but also the most distinctive phonetic and morphological features of the Belorussian language were dropped and replaced by specific Great Russian features.



During the following years, the Belorussian written language drew closer to the Russian.

In practice, Moscow's language policy went even further. Non-Russian peoples were obliged to enrich their languages with Russian scientific and technical terms, with the new Russian social and philosophical ideas, and with borrowings from Russian Marxism-Leninism. (cf. Osteuropa, 1/1959, pp 27-28) This procedure was legalized at the May 1959 scientific conference on questions of national written languages and improvement and standardization of terminology for the peoples of the USSR. The resolutions of the conference contained appropriate "recommendations for the further labors of Soviet linguists," naturally on the basis of Russian writing and terminology, (see Problemy Vosto-kovedeniya (Oriental Studies), No 4/1959, p 226f )

The national languages, particularly those of the Slavic republics like Belorussia and the Ukraine, were, moreover, gradually displaced in the administration as well as in scientific fields and in the high schools. The result of this policy was shown, for example, in Belorussia, where in 1956 in all 24 high schools and also in the state university in Minsk, instruction was carried on exclusively in Russian; until then it had been only in part. It was the same for the Academy of Sciences of Belorussia, whose few small publications were printed mainly in Russian.

The latest law on instruction and teaching in the national languages in the schools of the non-Russian republics must be regarded as an attempt by Moscow to completely suppress the national languages of the non-Russian peoples of the USSR. In the School Reform Law of 1958 (see O. Anweiler, Osteuropa, 1959, vols 2/3, pp 128-143), nothing, indeed, was said about the languages to be used in instruction, and it was only recommended that the governments of the republics consider the matter and be governed by their internal situations. This was done in all non-Russian republics from April to June 1959, but now a new Article 9, or in other cases 11, was added, that repealed an old law on the compulsory use of native languages in instruction. In Article 9 of the law "On Strengthening the Bonds of the Schools with Real Life and on the Further Development of the People's Education System in the Ukrainian SSR," we read, for example:

"Instruction in the schools of the Ukrainian SSR is carried on in the pupils' mother tongue. The parents decide which schools with which language the children attend. The learning of one of the USSR languages other than the language of instruction in a given school is at the discretion of parents and pupils, when the facilities for such instruction are available." (Pravda Ukrainiy, 19 April 1959)

With some stylistic variations, parallel laws in the other non-Russian republics contain the same provision.

At first sight, this law on language reform seems innocuous. It allows full freedom of choice of language of instruction and complete equality among languages. Still, it operates like the "full right of self-determination up to the point of secession or establish-

ment of an independent state," which Stalin defined as meaning that peoples "according to circumstances" and in the interest of the "proletarian revolution" could make no use of this right, (Stalin, Works, Russian ed., Vol III, p 52). This was what happened.

First, the School Reform Law repealed the earlier and supposedly irrevocable law on compulsory instruction in the mother tongue in the schools of the nationalities, and discontinued the earlier practice of support for the schools with native language instruction through the republican governments. According to the new law, the mother tongue can be entirely eliminated from instruction in the nationality schools, even as a subject to be taught. Russian enjoys a privileged position in that up to now -- and since the decree of 13 March 1938 -- it has been a required subject in all national minority schools. Also, the law contains the provision that if pupils and parents choose the mother tongue as language of instruction, Russian must unconditionally be chosen as the first foreign language to be learned. In the School Reform Law of the Ukrainian SSR we read:

"The Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR is responsible for working out measures to insure that all necessary steps are taken to guarantee the learning of and improvement of instruction in the Russian language in schools with Ukrainian or another language of instruction, so that Russian may be a powerful instrument of communication among the nationalities, of strengthening the friendship of the peoples of the USSR, and of mutual sharing in the treasures of Russian and world culture." (ibid.)

Second, under present conditions in the Soviet Union, particularly upon promulgation of the School Reform Law, pupils and parents are obliged to choose principally schools with Russian as language of instruction if they wish to avoid the suspicion of "bourgeois nationalism" and assure themselves of the chance to rise in Soviet society. Without a good knowledge of Russian, a Soviet youth will usually find his way barred in the high schools and, consequently, his social progress hampered. (cf. H. Carrere d'Encausse, Osteuropa, 1/1959m pp 22-30; an impressive example of how the high school remained closed to a gifted youth of the Udmurt Republic because of his insufficient command of Russian, is found in a story by A. Valzeva "House 13", Moskva, 1/1957) Even mild opposition to Moscow's wishes or a deviation in the direction of one's own nationalism can bring unpleasant consequences.

Third, the republics are as a matter of fact obliged to adopt the law. At first the provision on language instruction was rejected by the governments of the Republics of Latvia and Azerbaidzhan. Thereupon the Latvian government and Party underwent a thorough purge for "manifestations of bourgeois nationalism." (cf. for details J. v. Hehn, Osteuropa, 4/1960, pp 243 ff and 5/1960, pp 356 ff, and especially A. Fels, "On the International Education of the Working Class," Kommunist Sovetskoy Latvii, No 9/1959, pp 8-17; during this purge, Fels was successor to Kalnbrzin as First Secretary of the

CC of the Latvian CP)

In Azerbaidzhan, a group of "highly qualified" officials and propagandists appeared in October 1959 to investigate. This afforded an opportunity to call the Ninth Plenum of the CC of the Azerbaidzhan CP, at which the "manifestations of national isolationism in the language problem crisis" were denounced. (see W. Ju. Akhundov's report to the 24th Congress of the Azerbaidzhan CP, Bakinskiy Rabotchiy, 17/2/60) Thereupon the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaidzhan obediently adopted a new law with the title, "On the Introduction of Changes and Supplements to Article 11 on the Law of the Azerbaidzhan SSR 'On Strengthening the Bonds of the Schools with Real Life and on the Further Development of the People's Education System'." In conjunction with the overall directive which, in the future, "gives parents the right to decide to which school with which language of instruction their children may go," is the following common pattern to be seen among these "changes and supplements":

"To fulfill the desires of the working class, instruction in Russian in the schools of the Azerbaidzhan SSR must be improved as much as possible, so that Russian may be a powerful instrument of communication among the nationalities, of strengthening the friendship of the peoples of the USSR, and of mutual sharing in the treasures of Russian and world culture." (Bakinskiy Rabotchiy, 28/11/59)

As in Latvia, a purge of the state and Party apparatus followed also in Azerbaidzhan. The following were dismissed: I. D. Mustafayev, Member of the Presidium of the Azerbaidzhan Supreme Soviet; G. M. Mustafayev, Member of the Standing Committee for the People's Enlightenment and Culture of the Supreme Soviet; A. S. Babayev, Member of the Legislative Committee of the Supreme Soviet; G. M. Dshafarli, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet; K. Mustafayev, First Secretary of the CC of the Azerbaidzhan CP, and others. (Bakinskiy Rabotchiy, 27 & 28/11/59)

Doubtless, Moscow justified these latest language-policy measures on the grounds of the "general movement toward Communism." A. Andreyev commented on this problem in his essay, "The Triumph of Lenin's Ideas on People's Friendship," (Kommunist, No 6/1960, p. 39):

"A uniform socialist economic system and culture and the uniform ideology of Marxism-Leninism now prevail everywhere in the USSR. On this foundation, the national cultures are drawing ever closer together, and a uniform socialist nation is being formed."

The contradiction in the words "a uniform socialist ... culture .. prevails" and "the national cultures are drawing ... together" can be explained only by the fact that already the "uniform socialist culture" prevails over the "national cultures," and construction of the "uniform socialist nation" is proceeding under the sign of this domination. According to Stalin's familiar definition, still valid in the Soviet Union, a nation is "a historically formed, stable association of people, originating from a community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological character, as revealed in a community of culture." (Stalin, *Der Marxismus und die nationale und koloniale Frage*

(Marxism and the National and Colonial Question) German ed, Berlin, 1950, p 32) The Soviet Union still is entirely devoid of one of the characteristics of a "uniform socialist nation" -- there is no community of language. The latest language reform within school reform was directed toward correcting this deficiency.

Moscow bases its determination that Russian must be the foundation of the "uniform socialist nation," to which the non-Russian peoples adhere, on the assumption that Russian has for a long time been "the language of Soviet socialist culture and ideology" and the "common language" of Soviet society (feature article, "The 21st Congress of the CPSU and Some Questions of Russian Philology," Voprosy Yazykoznaniiya (Problems of Philology), No 3/1959, p 3f). But this is not the crux of the matter. As the contemporary press assures us, Russian is the language of "wisdom," "human genius," and "freedom." The Azerbaidzhan writer Mirsa Ibragimov offers a particularly striking example of such fulsome praise. To the beginning of 1959, he was Chairman of the Presidium of the Azerbaidzhan Supreme Soviet, but had, as he acknowledges, committed "some errors in the language field," (Bakinskiy Rabochiy, 11/12/59) and announced penitently:

"Russian has become for us a second mother tongue; without it, our struggle and all-around growth are unthinkable ... Leninism, which represents the peak of human thought, the highest achievement of Russian and world culture, was first laid down in the rich and powerful Russian language. With the help of this language, we are making the all-conquering philosophy and deep thoughts of Leninism our own and recognizing the correct path of struggle for a happy future for mankind." (Bakinskiy Rabochiy, 11/12/59)

In his Hymn of praise, Ibragimov completely forgot Lenin's directive that Marxist doctrine -- and consequently Lenin's own doctrine -- is best brought to each people in their own mother tongue. (Lenin, Works, 4th Russian ed, Vol XXX, p 142) The question of the language used by Marx and Engels, whose pupil Lenin considered himself, Ibragimov answers by saying that Marx and Engels had highly valued and learned Russian. Three years earlier, the same Ibragimov had ventured this opinion:

"We cannot tolerate an indifferent attitude toward Azeri -- (the native language of Azerbaidzhan) -- not even in political, social, or other organizations or activities. The principles of Lenin's nationality policy specify that the business of the Republic is to be conducted in the native language. All of us, including all executive state organs, must have complete mastery of our mother tongue." (Bakinskiy Rabochiy, 29/8/56)

To judge from the article of the two Ukrainian linguists I. K. Beloded and A. S. Melnichuk, "Problems of the Development of the National Languages During the Period of Transition from Socialism to Communism," (Voprosy Yazykoznaniiya (Problems of Philology), No 5/1959, pp 3-11), all national languages of peoples under Soviet rule, except



Russian, must die out in the not too-distant future. In their view, this will occur in the following stages: (a) progressive intermingling of populations; (b) adoption of Russian lexicography and phraseology; (c) increasing importance of Russian as a medium of international communication; (d) increasing importance of Russian in the administration of the various republics; (e) progressive importance of Russian as a medium for the development of socialist ideology; (f) vernacular borrowings from Russian "as the most advanced language" through the "less developed written languages of the peoples of the USSR"; (g) intensified learning of Russian in the schools of all non-Russian republics; (h) intensified struggle against "every manifestation of bourgeois nationalism in questions of language development."

A. Aksamitov, Candidate in Philology, already went a step further in his article, "Language is the Soul of the People," (published in Maladosz, organ of the Komsomol and Writers Association of Belorussia) and made clear to the Belorussian public:

"In our time, since Russians, Belorussians and Ukrainians live as one family and since Russian is understood by Ukrainians and Belorussians and is very close to their mother tongue these related languages may, in the future, fuse into a single language. This language will absorb all the riches and best features of all three. Belorussian at present is developing constantly closer to Russian." (loc cit., No 9/1959, p 140)

All Soviet efforts are directed toward this "fusion into a single language" (into Russian, of course), even to the application of administrative pressures. The words of the First Secretary of the CC of the Kirghiz CP, I. R. Rasakov, are proof of this. In May 1960 he told the First Congress of Intelligentsia of the Kirghiz SSR:

"The Ministry of People's Education, the provincial and district Departments of People's Education, and the school directors must take all necessary measures to see that, beginning with the school year (September 1960), Russian is taught in all Republic schools without exception. We must improve the quality of Russian language instruction so that intermediate school graduates not only have an effortless command of the vernacular, but that they can also read Russian literature without the use of auxiliary means." (Sovetskaya Kirgiziya, 21/5/60)

Since in the future all children must go through intermediate school, Russian must in a short time become the lingua franca of all inhabitants of the Soviet Union, particularly of the younger generation and the educated; with the construction of a uniform speech for the "socialist nation" and "Communist society," it must unavoidably play a decisive role. In any case, it seems hardly likely that Russian populations living in Great Russian settlement areas would adopt on their part the existing ingredients of the different languages, since the learning of other languages of the Soviet Union is not planned in their schools. Russians living in the non-Russian republics, with few exceptions, have not yet taken the trouble to learn



the local languages. The consequence will inevitably be a restriction in the use of the national languages or a down-grading of the non-Russian-speaking population elements.

A further look reveals consequences stretching beyond the borders of the Soviet Union. Here is a sentence out of the leading Moscow philosophy journal, Voprosy Filosofii (Vol 7/1959, p 35): "During the building of Communism, the importance of Russian as the international language of communication among socialist peoples will continue to grow."

The authoritative Party organ of the USSR revived Stalin's significant idea from Letters on Linguistics with the following words:

"The fusion of nations and national cultures should not be thought of as a process to be introduced only after the victory of Communism in every country of the world.

"The future formation of a single language familiar to all men and the fusion of national cultures into a world culture is a long a complex process having its roots in present conditions." (Kommunist, 13/1959, p 9)

The question only remains whether the 600,000,000 Chinese and their Party leadership are prepared to acknowledge this Russian claim and work toward its realization.

#### Moscow's "Historiography Policy"

Even though the main attention of Soviet historical research workers and writers is focused on recent and contemporary affairs, the field of historical studies in the non-Russian republics has grown considerably. Herein lies an essential difference from the Stalin era. In every republic it is now planned to publish five to ten volume works on national history, monographs and studies on specific problems and events. During the school year 1958-59, for the first time since the "purges" of the Thirties, courses in national histories were given in the intermediate and high schools of the republics. But Moscow strives energetically from the outset to blunt any possible resulting revival of national consciousness among the non-Russian peoples, at the same time giving a tendentious presentation of national history. Of interest is the following statement by a member of the History, Archaeology, and Ethnography Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Tadjik SSR who had received permission to produce comprehensive studies on the history of Tadjikistan:

"Through all our work must run the scarlet thread of the concept of friendship among the peoples of the USSR. It is our duty to portray the great liberating mission of the Russian people in behalf of the other peoples of our fatherland." (see Sh. Ratchabov, "The Condition and Principal Tasks of Soviet Historical Science in the Tadjikistan SSR," Voprosy Istorii, No 7/1960, p 199)

Similarly, the Director of the Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Belorussian SSR gave "pride of place" to "the inseparable union of the history of the Belorussian people with the

history of the Great Russian people." (I. S. Kravchenko, "Some Accomplishments and Problems of the Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Belorussian SSR, *ibid*, p 191.)

How the history of the non-Russian peoples of the USSR is to be Russified is stated essentially in the CC directive, "on the Problems of Party Propaganda under Present Conditions." There were recognizable tendencies in this direction even earlier, some measures having been taken since 1957, but the CC directive first officially legalized these attempts.

As we have seen, a relentless struggle was demanded in the directive against (a) "bourgeois nationalism," (b) "ignoring the social contradictions of the past," (c) "distortion of history and particularly of relations among the peoples of the Soviet Union," and (d) "national isolationism and exclusiveness." In addition, the directive contains the following order:

"In their propaganda work, the Party organizations and committees must seriously consider the national peculiarities of the various population groups (not peoples!) of our country and stress the international education of the working class, the further strengthening of friendship among the peoples, and the constant drawing-together and all-around enrichment of the socialist nations." (*Sovetskaya Belorussia*, 12/1/60)

It was further directed that the Soviet people were to be "educated in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and national pride," in "the fighting traditions of the past and the heroic spirit of the present," and in the spirit of hatred for "bourgeois ideology and cosmopolitanism."

These directives, however, apply only to the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union. Soviet announcements, as we have seen, hardly ever mention Russian "bourgeois nationalism." Of "Great Russian chauvinism" discussed now and then during the first years after Stalin's death, we hear and read no longer. The struggle against "bourgeois nationalism" is, however, the most important point in the CC directive, where it refers to the problems of nationalities and the history-writing of the non-Russian peoples which will be judged in terms of the manifestations of this nationalism. This explains why, at the republican Party Congresses after the CC directive, the emphasis fell on this struggle against "bourgeois nationalism." For example, W. Yu. Akhundov, First Secretary of the Azerbaidzhan CC, brought out that Azerbaidzhan historians had committed "serious errors" in their histories of the Communist Party and the revolutionary movement, while in their history of the Azerbaidzhan people "appeared expressions of national isolationism." He then declared:

"The problems of international education must remain the center of attention in Party, state, trade union, and Komsomol organizations. All our activities, the output of the press, television, and artistic groups must be saturated with the spirit of internationalism." (*Bakinskiy Robochiy*, 17/2/60)

Similar views were expressed by the First and Second Secretaries of the CC at the Communist Party Congresses of Uzbekistan (Sh. R.

Rashidov, Pravda Vostoka, 11/2/60); of Georgia "W. P. Mshavenadze, Zarya Vostoka, 26/1/60 and I. S. Dolidze, Zarya Vostoka, 31/1/60); of Kirghizia (I. R. Rasakov, Sovetskaya Kirgiziya, 26/2/60), etc. Rashidov especially distinguished himself, and it is hardly surprising that the Uzbekistan Congress declared in its message to Khrushchev:

"The Uzbek people will always be grateful to the Great Russian people for their all round unselfish help in the building of the new life. With their boundless heroism, their clear minds, and generous hearts; with their resolute adherence to the shining Communist ideals, the Russian people -- our big elder brother -- have earned the universal affection and deepest respect of all the brother peoples of the USSR." (Pravda Vostoka, 14/2/60)

The same extolling note is sounded in the concluding resolution of the Uzbek Party Congress:

"Party organizations must tirelessly educate the working class in the spirit of socialist internationalism, of life-giving Soviet patriotism, and of the indestructible friendship of the peoples. They must reveal the triumph of the Lenin nationality policy with shining and convincing examples. We must wage an unconditional, relentless struggle against manifestations of bourgeois ideology and against political indifference, national isolationism, local pride, and other vestiges of the past which are still existing in the consciousness of a part of mankind." (Pravda Vostoka, 19/2/60)

The historians of the non-Russian republics, who base their labors on these directives, must renounce objective presentation of the history of their peoples and seek to prove the "brotherly friendship" of the peoples, the "beneficent influence" of the Russian conquests and of Russian rule. Rashidov had just this in mind in his December 1959 speech to the Second Congress of the Uzbekistan Intelligentsia when he turned to the Central Asian historians and told them it was not their task to explore the history of their peoples or to seek their historical evolution in national peculiarities or in a special national course. The main task of Central Asian historians was to point out the progressive meaning of the union of Central Asia with Russia and, in addition, "to produce special scientific studies on the Great Russian people, their internationalism and their leaders, who have brought a progressive, democratic culture and the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist world outlook to Turkistan." (Pravda Vostoka, 12/12/59)

How has the implementation of these directives worked out in practice in historiography? The results of the Tashkent Conference of May 1959 deserve first mention. The conference was called by the History Department of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and was concerned with the "progressive meaning" of the union of Central Asia with Russia. It came to the conclusion that the union with Russia had been for Central Asia a "profoundly progressive" event, to which England's penetration into the Middle East had formed an obstacle, and that above all it had promoted the union of Central Asian peoples with the Russian

revolutionary movement and with the culture of the Russian people -- and, consequently, their "national liberation." With such an evaluation, everything else, including the resistance of Central Asian peoples to the Russian conquest, takes on a certain "reactionary," reprehensible character and becomes, according to the conference formula, an "agency of English imperialism." In the future the slightest attempt by Central Asian historians to regard Asia's subjugation by Russia in any other light will be considered as backsliding into "bourgeois nationalism."

Central Asia's historians henceforth will have to concentrate primarily on indications of the "progressive" results of the union of Central Asia with Russia and on glorifying the Russian people as "liberators" and "protectors." (A. P. Bashova, "The Joint Scientific Meeting on the Progressive Significance of the Union of Central Asia with Russia," Voprosy Istorii, No 8/1959, pp 173-183)

The thesis of the progressive significance of Russian colonial conquests for the affected peoples applies not only to Central Asia. The instruction of the CC of the CPSU of 6 May 1960 to the Georgian Communist Party and the decisions which followed may be cited as evidence. As stated above, in the instruction to Georgian publications those which "idealized the distant past" of the Georgian people were singled out. On 17 May, the CC of the Georgian CP issued a special directive on overcoming this "serious error" and called a conference on 31 May of the leading publishing and printing workers of the Republic. W. P. Mshavanadze, First Secretary of the CC for Georgia, and Secretary Dshibaladze appeared at the conference. They invoked the instruction and bitterly criticized the work of Georgian historians and particularly Georgian publishers; among them the publisher for the Georgian Academy of Sciences. The "political" and "ideological" errors of the latter consisted in their having published histories of art and literature with Georgian national themes and works on the general and cultural history of the Georgian people. According to Mshavanadze and Dshibaladze, these "ideological" errors must be drastically corrected and eliminated through the "education" of the scientific and artistic intelligentsia, through suppression of publications on the history of the Georgian people, through a changeover to books on history of art and literature with "contemporary themes," through strengthened Party control over the work of publishers, scientific research institutes and high schools, through increased importance and responsibility of editors in book publishing, etc. (Zarya Vostoka, 2/6/60)

Georgia was not an isolated case. The Communist Parties of the other republics received similar instructions. Not only these instructions but, more particularly, the trends in Moscow's non-Russian cultural policy in the field of historiography should be examined. Among others is a statement in Riga by A. Voss, Secretary of the Latvian CC, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the annexation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union:



"We must carry out a persistent struggle against all bourgeois nationalist manifestations and decisively rebuff those who display them. In lectures and propaganda we must expose the class character of bourgeois nationalism and show it as the ideological policy of enemy peoples and as the ideology and policy of treason against the national interests of the working class." (Sovetskaya Latvija, 10/6/60)

After further depreciating the national feelings of the Baltic peoples, their past and their history, Voss sought to portray the Russian people as the only possible savior and "friend" of the Baltic peoples, urging the latter to prize the "historical roots of friendship" with the Russian people and to borrow their culture, and above all their language. (ibid.)

Important to Moscow's historiography policy for the non-Russian peoples are also the measures taken to restrict the subjects for historical research, to plan and coordinate this research, and, finally, to achieve complete control over the work of historians in the republics. At the end of 1957 and during 1958, there were set up for this purpose, alongside the so-called Coordination Council of the USSR Academy of Sciences, which coordinates the scholarly work of republican academies and branches of the USSR Academy, the following scholarly councils of the History Branch of the USSR Academy. They deal with:

the history of the national freedom struggle of the peoples against colonialism, the history of the October Revolution, research into the historical background of the October Revolution, and the origins of Capitalism.

At the same time "creative groups" were formed within the Historical Institute of the Academy to deal with: the history of the peasant class and agriculture in the USSR, research into the revolutionary situation in Russia in the 1850's and 1860's, and research into the history of socialist ideas.

There were also committees for: the history of agriculture and the peasant class in Russia, and the history of historical science.

Among the tasks of these scholarly councils and "creative groups" are first of all the planning and coordination of historical research within the entire Soviet Union. In addition to this administrative function, so to speak, they must exercise real control over the work of historians in the non-Russian republics. This is done by convoking scientific conferences and meetings for orientation on questions and problems in the history of different peoples, on specific events, etc. Further control resides in "helping" republican historians write monographs or general works on history of the peoples and finally in editing and reviewing historical works in the republics before their publication.

An outstanding example of the achievements of such conferences is the already-mentioned Tashkent conference on the "progressive significance" of the union of Central Asia with Russia. A picture of "brotherly help" is portrayed in the following report of the Histori-



cal Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences:

"During the past year (1959), the Historical Institute has done a comprehensive job of editing and reviewing scholarly works prepared for publication by branches of the USSR Academy of Sciences and by the institutes of the union and autonomous republics. In many cases, scientific members participated directly in the work of the scholars of the national republics. With the help of scientific personnel of the Institute in 1959, The Union of Kirghizia with Russia (by the Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Kirghizian SSR) and The History of Karelia (Vol II) were completely edited. Help was also extended in editing a history of the Kalmuks.

The Institute has discussed a series of works under preparation by historians of the autonomous republics of Daghestan, Checheno-Ingush, Chuvash, and Kabardino-Balkaria, as well as the Karachayevo-Cherkess autonomous region. Scholars were given constant assistance through Institute members Ye. N. Kushayeva, A. W. Fadeyev, N. A. Smirnov, and others.

Works of historians from the Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaidzhan, the Moldavian SSR, Kirghizia, Estonia, and Lithuania were reviewed. Many members of the Institute have traveled in the union and autonomous republics to give on-the-spot assistance to historians. Last year the Institute coordinated scholarly research plans with all the historical institutes of the Academy of Sciences in the union republics and the branches of the USSR Academy of Sciences." (Voprosy Istorii, No 5/1960, p 202 f)

With such centralization of scholarly research and with such control from Moscow, the victory over manifestations of "bourgeois nationalism" in the historiography of the non-Russian peoples seems almost inevitable. Of the history of these peoples there remain, on the one hand, only the dark spots of "reaction and treason" and, on the other, "the eternal aspirations of the people toward unity with the Russian people."